AN OUTLINE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH WORK ENTITLED

Feminism in the Select Novels of Namita Gokhale and Kavita Kane: An Evaluative Study

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Introduction

Novel is a modern form of literature and the invention of printing made this form of literature possible. Novel originated in the early 18th century after the Italian word novella which was used for stories in the mediaeval period. Its identity has evolved and it is to mean a work of prose fiction over 5000 words. Novels focus on mainly characters development rather than plot. It is the study of the human psyche.

The spread of the novel began in the 17th century and flowered in the 18th century. Mainly the novel has been established in England and France during 17 century. Novel was not known in India until the 19th century. The first novel in India was written in Marathi by Baba Padmanji's *Yamunaparyatari* (1957).

Lakshman Moreshwar Halbe wrote the first romantic fiction *Muktamal in 1861;* Hari Narayan Apte wrote the most well known novels. Indian authors translated English Novels in the native language. In the early 20th century women in India also began to write novels and short stories.

Few authors started to highlights the struggle of lower caste people in their writing. Indian English Literature (IEL) has a relatively a recent history being only one and half centuries old. The first book written by an Indian English was *Travels of Dean Mahamod* a travel narrative by Shaikh Dean Mahamod in England in 1793.

In its early stages IEL was influenced by the western novel. Early Indian writers used English unadulterated by Indian words to convey an experience which was essentially Indian. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhayay (1908-2006) wrote *Rajmohan's Wife* and published in 1064. It was the first Indian novel written in English.

Raja Rao (1908-2006) wrote *Kanthapura* and the *Serpent of the Rope*. Kisari Mohan Ganguli translatedthe Mahabharata into English. Rabindranath Tagore and Dhan Gopal Mukharji were the first Indian authors who won a literary award in the United States.

P. Lal (1929-2010), a poet translator publisher and essayist founded a press in the 1950s for IEL writings.

Three main novelists who made trio are Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao and R.K.Narayan.

Kamala Markandaya is an early writer. The contributions of Manoj Das and Manohar Malgaonkar to growth of IEL largely remains acknowledged.

Salman Rashide's *Midnight Children* won Booker prize in 1981 (Booker of Booker's in 2008). Nayantara Sehgal was one of the first female Indian writers in English to receive worldwide recognition. She was awarded the Sahitya Akadmi Award for English in 1986 for her novel *Rich Like us.*

Anita Desai was shortlisted for Booker Prize three times and received a Sahitya Akadmi Award for her novel *Fire on the Mountain* (1977). Her daughter Kiran Desai won 2006 Man Booker Prize for her Second Novel *Inheritance of Loss*.

Origin of the Problem:

In reality novels always give us a new perspective towards life as novelist women have always been self defining. While they have been deeply and perennially aware of their individual identities and experiences, writers like Manju Kapoor,Kamala Markandaya, Kamala Das,Chitra Banarjee, Kavita Kane, Namita Gokhale etc. have depicted women's perspective towards society. They have read, seen, observed, felt and experiment the plight of the women and have portrayed the same through their respective fictional work so as to ensure respectable place to women in our society. Their feminist perspective deserves acknowledgement and applause.

Significance of the Study:

Present research is significant and important for many reasons.

First it will help up to understand the status of women since ancient times like Ramayana and Mahabharata epic.

Second it can guide us to do something prominent for giving them equal status in society.

Third it will help to understand the Indian society, it's problems and challenges with special reference to women.

Namita Gokhale's and Kavita Kane's novels are worth to be considered as a study of feminist perspective.

Scope and Limitations:

Indian novel in English is the broad area of study. Namita Gokhale and Kavita Kane highlight the Feminist perspective and mythology in their novels. These two novelists describes predicament, suffering and exploitation of women. Therefore the present research study has a wider scope for studying feminist perspective in the novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

The researcher will study 3 novels each of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

1) *Karna's Wife* by Kavita Kane

2) *Shakuntala* by Namita Gokhale

3) *Lanka's Princess* by Kavita Kane

4) *The Book of Shadows* by Namita Gokhale

5) *Sita's Sister* by Kavita Kane

6) *Mountain Echoes* by Namita Gokhale

Present research study has also some limitations. This research study deals with Indian novels which itself is a wider area of research. Researcher has decided to focus on only the Feminist perspective in the novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale. Therefore it is restricted to their selected only 3 novels of each one respectively and altogether six novels only.

Review of Literature:

Researcher has made substantial progress in examining Namita Gokhale's and Kavita Kane's Novels. Feminist perspective has not been studied in a vigorous way so far.

1) Namita Gokhale: A study of feminism in her writings, Ph.d. Thesis by Suman in Chaudhery Charan Singh University.

2) Feminist Consciousness in Contemporary Indian English Women Novelists with special reference to Namita Gokhale,Manju Kapoor and Gita Hariharan by Srivastava Sarika in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj University.

Aims & Objectives of the Research:

1) To study the predicament and suffering of women in Indian society as reflected in the selected texts.

2) To explore the position of women in contemporary Indian society as reflected in the selected texts.

3) To study maltreatment of women by the male dominated society as reflected in the selected texts.

4) To study the injustice to women as reflected in the selected texts.

5) To probe human weaknesses, follies and foibles by Indian men as reflected in the selected texts.

6) To explore the helplessness and pitiable condition of women as reflected in the selected texts.

7) To find out inequality & violence against women as reflected in the selected texts.

8) To explore hollowness of idealising of women as reflected in the selected texts.

Hypotheses:

The present research is based on the hypotheses that Both Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale are feminist writers and have showcased in their novels: 1) the position of women in contemporary Indian society, 2) the predicament and suffering of women in Indian society, 3) maltreatment of women by the male dominated society, 4) human weaknesses, follies and foibles by Indian men, 5) inequality & violence against women and 6) hollowness of idealising of women The present study is based on the hypothesis that " A Feminist perspective in the novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale"

Research Methodology:

The researcher will analyse and respond on the basis of thorough reading of the selected novels. The researcher intends to use theoretical, descriptive and interpretative methods.

1) The present research will undertake a close and analytical study of the selected original novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

2) The present research will take a review of Indian English Novelists and their contribution to Indian English Novel in short.

3) The present research will study various national and international journals where the works of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale have been discussed.

4) The present research will consider the views of some writers who made critical comments on Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

Data Collection:

The data can be divided into primary data and secondary data.

1) Primary Data

It includes all the original novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

2) Secondary Data

It includes magazines, articles, journals published by national and international editors about Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale.

Research Design:

Chapter-1

Introduction

This chapter will take a review of Indian English Novels right from the ancient times to the present day. It will concentrate on Indian English Novels and novel in detail. It will highlight pre and post independence Indian English Novelists and their contribution to Indian English Novel.

Chapter-2

Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale: Their Contemporary Writers and the Feminist Perspective

2.1 A Biographical Sketch of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale

Kavita Kane:

Kavita Kane (born 5th Aug.1960) is an Indian author. She is known for her mythological writings. All her books are based on Indian Mythology. Her bestselling novel is *Karna's Wife*.

Kavita Kane was born in Mumbai and grew up in other cities like Patana, Delhi and Pune. She is an alumnus of Fergusson College Pune and completed her post graduation both in English Literature and Mass Communication from the University of Pune. Although initially she wanted to be in the Administrative Services, she chose a career in Journalism because she wanted to write and was the only pragmatic career option for writing. She worked for 20 Years in various media houses. Magna Publications, Daily News and Analysis and The Times of India .After the success of her debut novel *Karna's Wife* she opted to become a full time author. Her books are *Analysis Awakening*, *Lanka's Princess*.*Meenka's Choices*, *Sita's Sister*, *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, *Karna's Wife* and *The Outcast Queen*.

Namita Gokhale (born 20 Jan 1956)

Namita Gokhale is an Indian writer, publisher and festival director. She is the author of sixteen books including nine works of fiction. *Things To Leave Behind* has been published in November 2016. It is a rich panoramic historical novel. Namita Gokhale won Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel *Things to Leave Behind* in January 2019. She was awarded the best, *Best Book of Fiction* written by a women author, category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival 2019. *Things To Leave Behind* has received the Best Fiction(English) Jury Award at the Valley of words International Literature Festival 2017 and is on the long list for the 2018 International Dublin Literature Award.

She is author of *The Book of Shadow*, *Paro*, *A Himalayan Love Story*, *The Puffin Mahabharata*, *The Book of Shiva*, *The Book of Shiva*, *In Search of Sita*, *Revisiting Mythology*, *Priya in Incredible Indyaa*, *Travelling in Travelling out*

2.2 Contemporary Writers:

1) Meena Alexander (17th Feb. 1957- 21 Nov .2018) was an Indian poet writer scholar, born in Allahabad India and Sudan. Her notable works are "Illiterate Heart, Raj Silk The themes

of migration and memory feature recurrently in her writings other novels of Meena Alexander are Atmosphere Embroidery, Manhattan Music, Birth place with Buried stone, Poetics Of Dislocation, Raw silk etc

2)Meena Kandasamy (1984) Illavenil Meena Kandasam (1884) is an Indian poet, fiction writer, translator and activist who is based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India most of her works are centered on Feminism and Anti-Caste Annihilation Movement of the Contemporary Indian Milieu.Her novels are When I hit you, The Gypsy Goddess, Exquisite Cadevers

3)Gita Hariharan

(1954) Gita Hariharan is an Indian writer based in New Delhi. Her first novel,* The Thousand Faces Of Night* won the Commonwealth Writer's Prize in 1993. Her novels are * The Thousand Faces Of Night, recent novel is I Have Became The Tide in 1995 Hariharan challenged the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act as Discriminatry against women

4) Urvashi Butalia(1952)

Born in Delhi. Urvashi Butalia is an Indian Feminist writer, publisher and activist. She is known for her work in the women's movement in India as well as for authoring books like the path Breaking, The Other Side of Silence: Voices from. Partition of India and Speaking peace, Women's voices from Kashmir

Shobha De and other writers will be studied in detail

2.3 **The Feminist Perspective:**

Actually Feminism is a wider concept all over the world. Here women writers become voices of women. Through novel, drama, article they not only want to show but want to make realise society of women's suffering and devotion. Women are always marginalized. Here Namita Gokhale and Kavita Kane through their novels want to show and throw light on women's suffering their silence, their self- respect, Knowledge and many more through the characters like Shakuntala, Urmila, Urvashi. Here these women writers want to show the society how women are great in their own way but always marginalized,neglected,suppresed by society.

Chapter 3

Feminist Perspective in Kavita Kane's ‘Karna's Wife’ and Namita Gokhale's ‘Shakuntala’

3.1 Karna's Wife by Kavita Kane

Women have to a greater extent been ignored in Indian Mythologies.

In ‘Karna's Wife’ the way in which Urvi’s story is blended with Mahabharata is remarkable. Kavita Kane has done a laudable job in bringing out the emotions of a wife who despite knowing the future of her husband is helpless.

Urvi’s story begins with an archery contest where Karna a Charioteer’s Son openly challenges Arjuna and is turn ridiculed for his low birth. Enamoured by the charm and godly beauty, she falls in love with him and in spite of the social humiliation marries with him. Her story runs parallel to the events of the Mahabharata. How each of those events shapes her and her peaceful life, turns the gist of Kavita Kane’s book.

When the unflinching loyalty of Duryodhana leads him towards the path of destruction she tries to persuade him unsuccessfully. When Draupadi is tarnished in the royal court by Kauravas. She acts as Karna’s conscience-keeper and leaves him. When it becomes evident that the Great War would lead to Karna’s death. She tries to dissuade him from participating. Many such episodes which directly affect her, but on which she has no control over are beautifully narrated

2) **Shakuntala**

In this hauntingly beautiful book Namita Gokhale plays memory and desire by invoking the name of *Shakuntala*Just as a musician tosses a phrase and lets it shimmer and flourish on a cascade of sounds. Shakuntala is the female counter-part of Hesse's Siddhartha a seeker who must follow the trail of her destiny without looking back, solely because it is not the answers that matter but the questions.

Shakuntala here too there is a wise old fisherman like Hesse's boatman, who teaches her how to fish with life and images of the river, of caves, of secret Mother Goddesses hiding with them to give succour to the hillbilly Shakuntala.

It is gorgeously touchy feely take that will bring back memories of the Feminist 1960s and the fervour of mystic India .Gokhale is drunk with the sounds of words and that itself makes for a hypnotic read.

Chapter 4

Feminist perspective in the novels of Kavita Kane's ‘Lanka's Princess’ & Namita Gokhale's ‘The Book of Shadows’

4.1 Lanka's princess

Lanka's princess tells the story of Surpanaka who was born as Meenakshi,a pretty girl with beautiful eyes Suparnaka is said to be the reason for the war between Lord Rama and king Ravana of Lanka in Hindu Mythology.

Lanka's princess follows Suparnaka from her early childhood days, less loved by her parents into her adulthood,she is misunderstood character in Mythology. She gets a secondary appearance (firstly because she is a monstress and secondly as she is a women) in the epic. Meenakshi's father the *rishi*(Hermit) who realising that his children Bhavesh more blood of

monster from their Mother's side in them. They do not crave for knowledge and their actions are not righteous, so perhaps he has to choose between his family and ethics.

Kane tells us how a demure girl. Meenakshi is given the name Surpanaka and whether that name is apt one or not.

4.2 The Book of Shadows

The novel is an ambitious book that investigates the nature of reality love and faith. It is a work of startling originality by one of India most daring and talented writers. Her fiction is wide ranging and experimental. Her characters are haunting The tale of the novel revolves around the matter of acid attack.

The Protagonist of Gokhale's Novel Rich it's Tiwari, her fiancé has committed suicide in the beginning of the novel. He was not happy with the relationship with Ruchita. After the death of Fiance his sister threw a beaker full of acid on Ruchita's face. She wanted to wash her face but no water was there so she had to bear, unbearable pain.

After this incident Rachita feels like that all love and happiness are no more than mirage. She experiences everything which has overpowered her sometimes this world seems unreal to get. Thus the Novelist shows the feeling of despair, loneliness, suffering and despondency of the victim of acid attack Rachita.

Chapter 5'

Feminist perspective in Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister* and Namita Gokhale's *Mountain Echoes*

5.1 Sita's Sister

Sita's Sister tells the tale of the Ramayana from a women's Perspective. Here the women is Urmila, Sita's younger Sister and Lakshman's wife and daughter of king Janaka. Urmila is a character that finds the thing mention in Valmiki's Ramayana and the various local versions. However she is a significant contributor to the events in the story and definitely one of the strongest character.

While reading the various traditional rendering of Ramayana are often wonders why is there so little said about the brave self sacrificing wife of Laxman who upheld "dharma" as much as Rama did.

Sita's Sister is really a book that takes about all characters

The women in Ramayana, unlike Valmiki's Ramayana that is about Rama Sita and their exile and among all these women it is Urmila who comes out as the most influential character outspoken yet respectful yet calm and strong in the face of adversity a learned scholar with an ability to forgive.

5.2 Mountain Echoes

This is an evocative recollection of life in the kumaon hills through the first person accounts of four talented and highly individualistic women, all in or approaching their eighties. Witness to the changes and vicissitudes of the country their testimony forms an important contribution to the fifty years of India's independence.

Chapter 6:

Conclusion

Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale expresses suppressed, ignored,voice of women in their respective novels taken for this study. In India we worship women as deity but sometimes we ignore or we take women for granted. These two novelists delineate the cruel reality of marginalized and injustice to women. These novelists explore women's status from ancient to present and show how women are strong all the time.

The last chapter will be a summary to research findings and the researcher will conclude and reach the hypothesis, it will lead to the Feminist perspective in the novels of Kavita Kane and Namita Gokhale's novels.

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